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Economic and Social Council

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Provisional summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 4 February 2000, at 3 p.m.

Acting President: Mr. Niehaus (Vice-President) ..... (Costa Rica)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

1. **The President** announced that the meeting would be suspended to permit further informal consultations to be held.

2. *The meeting was suspended at 3.20 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.*

Consideration of draft proposals submitted by the President and members of the Bureau on the basis of informal consultations held pursuant to paragraph 2 (1) of Council decision 1988/77 (E/2000/L.1)

Draft decision I: Provisional agenda for the substantive session of 2000 of the Economic and Social Council

3. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

4. *Draft decision I was adopted.*

Draft decision II: Basic programme of work of the Economic and Social Council for 2001

5. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

6. *Draft decision II was adopted.*

Draft decision III: Working arrangements for the substantive session of 2000 of the Economic and Social Council

7. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

8. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union, suggested that the working arrangements for the substantive session should be amended so that the debate on coordination would be held before the debate on humanitarian affairs. In that way, the latter would not be interrupted by the weekend.

9. **Mr. Gallagher** (United States of America) said he would like to have further information on the proposal put forward by the previous speaker. He asked whether three days would be devoted to humanitarian affairs, and then the debate on coordination would be held.

10. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) explained that she was not proposing a change in the length of the debate on humanitarian affairs (which would be two and a half days, as indicated in the draft decision), but was simply suggesting that the meeting should begin with the debate on coordination, from Friday to Tuesday morning, so that humanitarian affairs could be discussed without interruption, from Tuesday afternoon to Friday morning. The rationale behind the proposal was that, as the debate on coordination fell into two parts, the first could be considered on Friday and the second on Monday.

11. **Mr. Khare** (India) asked whether he had understood correctly that the debate on coordination would be held from Friday, 14 July, to the morning of Tuesday, 18 July, and would be followed by the debate on humanitarian affairs from Tuesday afternoon to the morning of Friday, 21 July.

12. **The President** said that that was correct. He took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision, as orally amended.

13. *Draft decision III, as orally amended, was adopted.*

Draft decision IV: Date of the high-level meeting of the Council with representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions

14. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

15. *Draft decision IV was adopted.*

Draft decision V: Theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of the substantive session of the Council of 2000

16. **Mr. Sotirov** (Bulgaria), Vice-President of the Council, said that, following in-depth informal consultations, delegations had agreed that the theme of the debate on humanitarian affairs should be: "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian intervention and the role of technology in mitigating the effects of natural disasters and other emergency humanitarian situations, including conflicts, with emphasis on the resulting displacement of persons". In preparation for the debate, two study groups would be organized, one of which would address the issue of natural disasters, while the other would deal with other emergency situations, including displaced persons.

17. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

18. *Draft decision V was adopted.*

Draft decision VI: Theme for the item on regional cooperation of the substantive session of the Council of 2000

19. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

20. *Draft decision VI was adopted.*

Draft decision VII: Elections to the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

21. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

22. *Draft decision VII was adopted.*

Draft decision VIII: Implementation of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 29 April 1999 on the difference relating to immunity from legal process of a Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights

23. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) requested that consideration of the draft decision should be postponed to a later date.

24. **Ms. Kelley** (Secretary of the Council) observed that, in the draft decision, the Economic and Social Council would simply be deciding to take note of the letter of the Secretary-General (E/1999/124) and to continue to be seized with the matter with which it dealt. The draft decision had been the subject of agreement *ad referendum* during the informal consultations.

25. **The President** said that if there were no other objections, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

26. *Draft decision VIII was adopted.*

Letter dated 31 January 2000 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council (E/2000/4)

27. **The President** drew the attention of the members of the Council to the letter dated 31 January 2000 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council, informing him of the open meeting held by the Security Council on 10 January 2000 to discuss the impact of HIV/AIDS on peace and security in Africa, and of the Council's desire to explore the possibility of further cooperative action with the Economic and Social Council. After discussing the matter, the Bureau recommended that the Economic and Social Council should respond positively to the request contained in the letter from the President of the Security Council and should convene a meeting to consider possible ways and means of cooperation between the two bodies. The Council might also convene, in cooperation with the Security Council, a meeting on HIV/AIDS at which the Joint United Nations Programme on Aids (UNAIDS), other relevant United Nations system organizations, bilateral and multilateral agencies, pharmaceutical companies and civil society organizations could discuss ways and means of working together to combat the scourge of HIV/AIDS, particularly in Africa. If the members of the Council agreed with that approach, the President would respond to the President of the Security Council accordingly.

28. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) said that the letter in question (E/2000/4) included a reference to a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council from the Director of UNAIDS outlining the follow-up actions UNAIDS planned to take to combat and control the spread of HIV/AIDS, as well as its plans to coordinate with the Security Council. It would be helpful if the Secretariat would distribute copies of that letter.

29. **The President** replied that the letter had been issued as a document of the Security Council, and as such was at the disposal of all members of the Organization.

30. **Mr. Mérouane** (Algeria) said that the problem of AIDS in Africa was a very substantial one. It would be helpful if delegations could have a written document summarizing the statement made by the President, as that would enable them to consider it in greater detail.

31. **Mr. Khan** (Director of the Division for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination) said that, if he had understood the matter correctly, the representative of Algeria was asking for the text of the statement that the President had just made on the subject of the letter from the President of the Security

Council. The Secretariat would do everything possible to have the text of that statement distributed quickly.

32. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) again requested that the Secretariat should distribute the letter from the Director of UNAIDS addressed to the Security Council. It was important to learn what actions UNAIDS was contemplating so that those actions could be discussed at the meetings on HIV/AIDS which the Council intended to hold.

33. **Mr. Rahmtalla** (Sudan) said that he shared the view that it would be useful to have a written text of the President's statement which representatives could submit to their respective authorities before coming to any decision on the matter.

34. **The President** said that the Secretariat would distribute the text of his statement, and that any decision on the matter would be postponed.

35. *It was so decided.*

Letter dated 3 February 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council (E/2000/5)

36. **The President** drew the attention of the Council to a letter dated 3 February 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council (E/2000/5). In that letter, the Government of Malaysia offered to host the Fifteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific in Kuala Lumpur from 10 to 14 April 2000.

37. He took it that the Council wished to accept the offer of the Government of Malaysia.

38. *It was so decided.*

39. **Mr. Ibrahim** (Malaysia) thanked the Council for its gracious acceptance of his country's offer to host the conference.

40. **Ms. Zhang** (China) raised the question of a change in the spelling of the name of Macau, China, used by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

41. In its resolution 1999/38 of 28 July 1999, entitled "Change of the name of Macau to Macau, China, in the terms of reference of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific", the Economic and Social Council had decided to amend the terms of reference of ESCAP, on the recommendation of the Commission at its fifty-fifth session, so that Macau could continue to participate in the activities of ESCAP as an associate member under the name "Macau, China" with effect from 20 December 1999. The Government of China wished to request the Council to alter the original spelling "Macau" to the formal English spelling "Macao", in line with the spelling used in the "Joint Declaration of the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Portuguese Republic on the Question of Macao". According to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the change would require an amendment of the terms of reference of ESCAP. She requested the Council to amend the terms of reference accordingly.

42. **The President** said he took it that the Council agreed that the terms of reference of ESCAP should be amended to accommodate a change in the spelling from Macau, China, to Macao, China.

43. *It was so decided.*

44. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) speaking on behalf of Portugal and not on behalf of the European Union, informed the Council that the question fell within the competence of the Cartographic Conference, but as she did not have the relevant report at her disposal, she could not accept the proposal put forward by the representative of China without first consulting the pertinent document, even though she anticipated no difficulty. She would like to consult the document (if the Secretariat could provide her with a copy quickly) and would then make her views on the matter known.

45. **The President** said that the Secretariat did not have the document in question in the room and that in his view the point was already settled. He asked the delegation of Portugal whether it would agree that the document should be supplied later.

46. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) agreed to the President's suggestion.

47. **Mr. Suh** (Republic of Korea) thanked the Economic and Social Council for having elected his country to the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). That had been an event of great importance for the Republic of Korea, which, in May 1997, had launched an open debate on the provision of humanitarian assistance for refugees and contributed to

the adoption of two Presidential statements that had drawn the attention of the international community to the issue. The Republic of Korea supported and would continue to support UNHCR, and would pursue its initiatives for the protection and defence of the rights of refugees.

48. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, thanked the President for the transparency with which the theme of the debate on humanitarian affairs had been formulated.

49. **Mr. Gallagher** (United States of America) expressed satisfaction that draft decision V (Theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of the substantive session) had been adopted, and that two study groups of the Economic and Social Council had been entrusted with the responsibility of looking into, respectively, issues relating to natural disasters and those relating to other emergency situations, including the situation of internally displaced persons.

50. **Ms. Guerreiro** (Portugal) said that greater cooperation would be desirable. She commended the President and the members of the Bureau for their work on the debate on humanitarian affairs, and said that, in her view, the dialogue was likely to continue in a very constructive spirit.

51. **The President** said that he would like to revert to the request by the delegation of Algeria. A background paper was being distributed and he wondered whether, as a result, it would be possible to reach a decision and provide a response, as the President of the Security Council had requested.

52. **Mr. Mérouane** (Algeria) thanked the President and the Secretariat for their quick work in providing him with the document he had requested. His delegation had no objection, but without the document it had been unable to follow the President's suggestion. He suggested that, in the future, delegations should be allowed enough time to follow the discussion and reach a decision where indicated.

53. The President took note of the recommendation made by the representative of Algeria. He would inform the President of the Security Council of the Economic and Social Council's decision.

54. He announced that the organizational session for 2000 of the Economic and Social Council was adjourned.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.